1:Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

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Naming the Child

On the day of his birth, the child is given a name, but this is not the one it carries throughout life. The latter name, sometimes called the school name, may be given 5 days after birth, counting the date of the birth. This custom of double naming is still used in Hanashiro and Hinatogawa, though, according to local residents, it disappeared from Matsuda ten years ago. It is hard to discover the reasons for this double naming. Perhaps the first name is a temporary one to be used for the first crucial days of the child's life. If he survives, he receives his permanent one. This name, while known to the child, is not ordinarily retained when he gets his second name. Among the very old, however, some of these first names have been retained through life.[4] In Hanashiro, young and old alike may be known by both names, but the younger are apt to use the full given name. Adults and the old are known by both names.

The names given on the birth day are often the occasion of laughter, as some have the same pronunciation as common names of household utensils, agricultural tools, or domestic animals. The following list was obtained in Hanashiro but the same names were equally familiar in the other villages. (1) Ushi, given to males and females. Ushi is also the word for cattle. (2) Kame, also the word for a turtle or a tortoise. (3) Tsuru, also a stork or crane. (4) Nta, given to both sexes, the Okinawan word for pig. (5) Handu, also a water barrel. (6) Kama, also a sickle. (7) Nabi, a pot.[5]

These are homonyms. The name is written in hiragana or katakana (the Japanese syllabaries), not with the Chinese character of its homonym. Hence it would be incorrect to say that the child is named "Cow," "Pig," "Pot," etc.

In Matsuda, up to about 30 years ago, according to one informant, if a wife gave birth to a child in the husband's absence, the eldest relative present gave the child a name of the sex opposite its own, apparently to avoid bad luck by resort to contrariety. When mothers gave birth to a child in the toilet, it was named nta or nte, apparently referring to the identity of the toilet and the pig pen.

4 This is apparent in analyzing the family registers (koseki)

5 Other names are Tamachi (female); Umeto (female in Hanashiro); Makatu (f); Chiru (f); Taru (male and female); Jiro (m); Sanru (m and f but scarce); Miyo (m); Utu (f); Kenashi (f), and Kana (m and f).

553 The first naming of children is done at a ceremony on the day of birth, or on the following day, if the birth took place at night. It is known as ubagi. There is a small gathering of [262] relatives. Soup, rice, and a little sake may be served. Ordinary rice or rice cakes (mochigome) may be prepared and put on the [78A] Buddhist god shelf. If a boy, the relatives and parents pray for his strength, if a girl for her good health. Ubagi, an Okinawan word, is also known as sūchūsan no iwai (Japanese). The ceremony precedes the burying of the afterbirth.

553 One important element in the naming of a child on its day of 823 birth is the state of the tide. The child is named only if the tide is coming in. It is not necessary that the tide be high. Perhaps midpoint is the best, though high tide is considered good. Practically everyone can calculate the time when the tide is coming in or out; since they all know the lunar calendar with a cycle completed in 15 days, it is a simple calculation.[6] The explanation always given for calculating the tide on this and other occasions is that when the tide is coming in, fortune and happiness will enter in the new life or the new situation. When the tide is ebbing, everything goes out and away.

852 The real celebration of the birth of a child occurs several days after birth. It usually occurs on the 5th or 6th day counting the birth day. This is known as mansan (Okinawan) and is in honor of the good health of the mother and the child. In Japanese, it is also called muikajari.[7] In all communities studied, the week long all night celebration has disappeared, though the celebration of mansan might last well into the night.

One celebration, observed in Hinatogawa, is probably typical of the thousands that take place every year in rural Okinawa. The guests came early in the evening to the parents' home, or, as in this case, to the home of the child's grandfather, since the father, a first son, lived in his parents' home. The men sat in the first room (ichibansa), [562] the women in the second (nibansa), following custom in parties in which both sexes are present. The head of the house, the grandfather, sat in front of the alcove (tokonoma) of the first room. The child's father [576] sat next to him. Each guest went on his knees, bowed, congratulated the father and presented him with a small money gift. The usual gift [931] is about Y20. This was accepted by the father, who then responded with a short speech. Sometimes these are formal and stiff, sometimes like a simple conversation. The guests also congratulated the

6 The method of computing times of high and low tide will be given later. The tide is important in the marriage ceremony, when moving into a new house, or when moving, in the case of a second or succeeding son, from a main house to establish a branch family, and at a child's party on the first anniversary of its birth.

7 The day was variously given me as 5th, 6th, and 7th day after birth. Muika in muikajari means 6th day.

565 A common device among noble families was to vary the second
553 character of the Chinese compound which made up the given name. This custom still remains, but has no significance beyond individual family pride. The following case illustrates this naming device:

Relation to Present Head of House	Given Name
Grandfather	Chohyo
Father	Chokan
Present Head	Choyo
First Son	Choko
Second Son	Choshin
Third Son	Chokeii
Fourth Son	Chosei

554 Before the war, the village hierarchy consisted of the headman and retired elders and officials, the school principal and teachers if resident there, the well-to-do farmer, followed by the ordinary farmers or fishermen.[3] These distinctions are now blurred and have been affected by other changes. The school principal and the school teacher retain their prestige, but they have lost their relatively high economic status. Their clothing and the appearance of their homes are indistinguishable from those of a farmer. The ordinary farmer who works his field during the day and whose wife raises the pigs is in a better economic position. The same applies to village and township officials. Many distinctions
[556] based on wealth have disappeared because of the destruction and general impoverishment of the war. Neither are distinctions possible in dress, for everyone wears makeshift clothing. Post-war circumstances have put the old at a disadvantage in dealing with new situations. Present day village life is fluid. The war and its aftermath have blurred many of the former distinctions based on age, occupation, or wealth.

621 Village leadership is based on individual qualities, but is limited
208 by group opinion which all individuals respect. Decisions of any character, personal, familial, or political, emerge from consultation and discussion. One constantly hears the word sōdan, meaning a discussion or a consultation, with reference to decision making.

555 What types of individuals assume leadership in village affairs?
212 First, leadership comes from a group that is literate. This limits the people available for responsible positions. Occupations such as the

3 According to old residents in Matsuda, there were in their youth, classes whose occupation made them inferior. Examples were bell ringers
[461] ringers at funerals and pig killers. Pig killing is still considered
[565] a low occupation, but this has no relevance to village life, for no commercial slaughtering is done in the villages. In the villages,
[963] there is no suggestion of the existence of groups looked down upon because of their occupation, with the possible exception of a collector of night soil—and this occupation is infrequent.

842 of the economic hardship incurred as a result of large families. A few
[843] of the more outspoken mothers complain bitterly against the old peo-
[593] ple who expect them to continue bearing children until three male heirs are born. Men desire male heirs, and one son is not enough: the favored number is three. Informal interviews reveal that in spite of the cultural preference for sons, mothers welcome daughters, who grow up to be useful helpers. Even if women protest when they feel tired of bearing children, they submit to their husband's demands. Since Japa-
551 nese given names are used today, the practice of naming a girl Sueko
● 553 (end child), to indicate that one considers her to be the last, is often
842 resorted to. If this proves insufficient and another follows, she might
[177] be called Tomeko (stop child). In one family the wife gave her baby girl the name Sueko to indicate that she did not desire any more children. Her husband, however, disagreed, for he wanted another son, and registered the child without his wife's knowledge under another name.

842 Although the older generation, which has supported large families,
744 looks on birth control measures with distaste, the young mothers circulate information published in Japanese magazines and by the Okinawan public health department on this matter, and a few families actually use contraceptives. However, in general, public health nurses
847 have found it extremely difficult to discuss matters like birth control, abortion, and infanticide with villagers. "We suspect that these measures are practiced everywhere. Of course, with the system of registration and public health nursing, infanticide is hardly possible; however . . . we could not say. . . ." • It is interesting to note that in
[732] Taira there are mental defectives but no physical defectives. Abortion
[848] is legal with a doctor's consent, but informants claimed it was not practiced. There are illegitimate children born in the village.

842 "The seeds, they must match. If they do not match, then it cannot be," explain the villagers. They continue, "It is like planting a field, however; if the soil is hostile to growth, nothing can happen." Thus the villagers express their theories of conception.

843 Cessation of menstrual periods signals the start of pregnancy, and the sudden craving for a particular kind of food forces the woman to acknowledge the fact. Informal interviewing and casual observation
[461] reveal that morning sickness is not usual. Women rarely miss a work-
[522] ing day in the fields and mountains even in the early stages of pregnancy. One male who failed to appear for work with the rest of the male population of the village was the butt of many a joke. "How now, you are taking over the task of your wife?" teased the men and women.

[164] Malfunction of the kidneys is not uncommon among pregnant

• Personal communication from public health nurses.

2[illegible]aretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
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Today the *yukajiru* ceremony held on the fourth day ends the seclusion. A group of close relatives gather to ask for the good health of the child and to make food offerings to the ancestors.

On the fourth or fifth day a name is selected for the newborn. In the old days rice oracles presided over by an old woman were consulted to ensure that the name consist of the proper combination of Japanese writing characters, an essential for the well-being of the child's personality. Today family elders and the local teacher are consulted. In the pre-Japanese periods, temporary names were used until a permanent name was given. This practice was intended to fool the spirits during the early years when the child was thought to be particularly susceptible to spirits.*

On the sixth day after birth the mother is allowed to take her first postdelivery bath; the room which she has occupied with her baby is cleaned and aired, and preparations begin for the *mansang* celebrations. For this event the mother's parents try to be present, especially if it is a first child. Friends and relatives in the village attend. A female elder of the patrilineal kin group or the priestess prays behind a tray of rice, rice wine, and incense so that the child will sleep peacefully and not cry at night. Thanksgiving prayers are offered to the ancestors and the nature deities for the health of both mother and child.

When the prayers are completed, a man sings the *mansang* song to the accompaniment of a samisen. The father of the baby then rises to dance briefly, sits down, and writes with brush and ink on a white sheet of paper the name and birth date of his child. The paper is then hung on the wall near the alcove. Meanwhile the special song is being concluded:

> Coming from the darkness to light,
> This baby was received as a treasure
> And the mother is being celebrated.

Food is then served, and the guests discuss the name and admire the newborn. Like all parties, the celebration ends with song, dance, and wine drinking.

The *mansang* celebrations mark the end of the most critical period for the infant. From now on he may be taken outdoors. At the month's end, his parents may take him to see his maternal grandparents in their village, to offer food at the ancestral shrine of the mother. This is called the first walk. Sons who have left the paternal village for the city return with their infant to observe this day.

* Hanging an irregularly left-woven rope in the delivery room to keep out evil spirits which might harm the newborn, is no longer done in Taira.

brazier in the city. She was kept warm continuously, even in hot weather, so that, it is said, women often broke out in skin eruptions from the heat. At present younger women are not following this practice and many regard it as a foolish custom. The absence of jiiru in post-war houses may be a factor in the decline of the custom.

Post-natal Observances During the first year of life the child is the center of several ceremonies. They are in brief:

1) Mbagii suuji, "Red rice ceremony". Held on the day of birth. Relatives, friends, and neighbors come. Rice dyed red and a soup of taro stems (a symbol of many children) are offered to the ancestral tablets and served to the guests. The afterbirth is buried behind the house while the children are made to laugh so that the baby will have a good disposition.

2) Naajiki, "Naming". Held during the first week. Practices vary. In one variety the baby's grandmother releases a crab and a grasshopper and shoots an arrow at a winnowing tray; in another she divines with rice grains to see if the name she has selected is proper. This rite was formerly held to give the baby its native Okinawan name.

3) Mansang, "Full birth". Held on the 7th or 30th day after the birth to celebrate the full term. A feast is served to relative, friends, and neighbors.

4) Naa'njii, "First going out". Held for a boy on the first day of the ten-day cycle, designated as kanii, on the second kanii day for a girl. The baby's grandmother makes it pray to the ancestral tablets and to the oven god, then marks its forehead with soot and takes it out, formerly to pray to the god of the pigsty-privy.

5) Hachi-atchii, "First walking". Held whenever the mother is first able to go to visit her parents and siblings. She takes gifts of food to them and in return they give money to the baby.

6) Tanka, "Birthday". Held on the first anniversary of the birth. A feast is prepared and many relatives and friends come bringing gifts of money. The child's future career is divined by placing a number of objects in front of it---money, a book, an abacus, food, etc. If the child chooses the money he will be rich; if the book, a scholar; if the food, a glutton; and so forth. The odds are usually weighted in favor of a desirable future.

There seems to be some variation in all of these practices. Several may be obsolescent because some of the elements entering into them are no longer in use, the pigsty-privy and the native names, for example.

Infanticide New-born babies may be done away with if they are not wanted, but this is probably not at all common under ordinary circumstances. One example was recorded: An old woman who died recently lay for about a week on her death bed unable to talk. Her children gathered about her, wondering if some sin ('tsumi') were not in need of atonement ('tsugunai').